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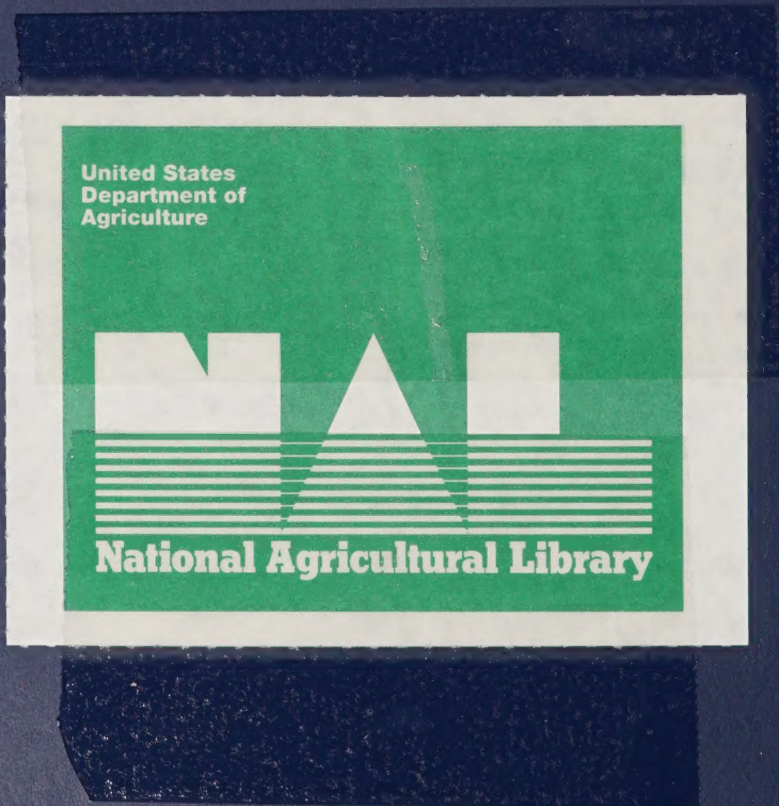
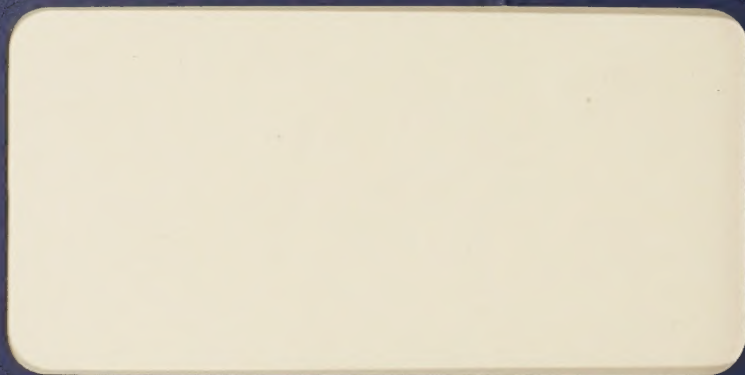
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ESTIMATION OF ELIGIBILITY
FOR THE WIC PROGRAM

Update of the WIC
Eligibility Study to 1986

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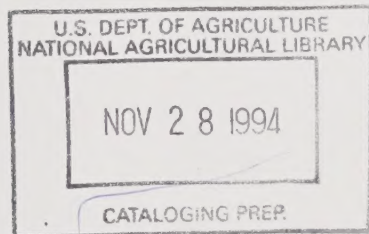


**ESTIMATION OF ELIGIBILITY
FOR THE WIC PROGRAM**

Update of the WIC
Eligibility Study to 1986

Office of Analysis and Evaluation
Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

February 1990



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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BACKGROUND

Purpose of Report

This report updates the 1987 study of eligibility for the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (the WIC Program) which estimated the number of persons eligible for WIC Program benefits in 1984¹. This report presents updated data for 1986, and compares the 1986 updates to the 1984 figures.

The WIC Program

The WIC Program is a Federal-State nutrition and health-assistance program for low-income child-bearing women, infants and young children. To be eligible, an applicant must meet three basic criteria:

- (1) Categorical -- Participants must be pregnant women (including the first six weeks after delivery), breastfeeding women up to 1 year after delivery, non-breastfeeding postpartum women up to 6 months after delivery, infants up to 12 months of age, or children up to their fifth birthday.
- (2) Income -- The maximum Federal income limit is 185 percent of the U.S. Poverty Guideline, but States may set lower standards corresponding to income limits used in their other health delivery programs.
- (3) Nutritional Risk -- This is certified by a health professional. Two major types of nutritional risk are recognized: medically-based risk such as anemia, underweight, maternal age, history or pregnancy complications or poor outcomes, etc.; and diet-based risk such as inadequate dietary patterns, as determined by 24-hour food recall, food frequency, or diet history measurements..

Data and Methodology

This report expands the earlier estimates of WIC income-eligible persons, which were based on a special tabulation from the Full Detail File of the 1980 U.S. Census of Population and Housing. That original study estimated the number of income-eligible persons who would be found to be at nutritional risk, under representative WIC Program criteria, and thus would be fully eligible for the program. The estimates of nutritional risk

¹United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Analysis and Evaluation, Estimation of Eligibility for the WIC Program: Report of the WIC Eligibility Study, July 1987.

frequency among the WIC target population were made from national health and dietary survey data. Two large-scale Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) surveys were used: the 1976-1980 Second National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES-II) and the 1980 National Natality Survey/National Fetal Mortality Survey (NNS). As with the original study, this study does not include Puerto Rico, Guam, or the U.S. Virgin Islands, which have WIC Programs, but which may not be accurately represented by the national health survey data. In addition, WIC Indian State Agencies are not treated separately, but are included within the State and national totals.

A projection model was used to "age" the detailed 1979 baseline period estimates by applying the rate of change since 1979 in the size of the WIC target population, calculated from the annual income/poverty figures provided regularly from the Current Population Survey of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. In this way, regular detailed updates can be prepared of the estimated WIC-eligible population nationally. These updates are based on changes in income only; more recent health and nutritional status survey data are not available.

Comparable updated estimates are not available for States and local areas. While the national average rate of change since 1979 can be applied to produce approximate estimates of current WIC eligibility in these areas, such estimates cannot be regarded as accurate or valid unless the specific economic changes occurring in the particular area over the period, as compared with national-level economic changes, can also be factored into the estimations. Consequently, any such current-period State or local-area estimates projected from the baseline estimates of the present report should be developed and used with caution.

Nutritional Risk Criteria

Three representative sets of the most prevalent or widely used operational criteria for nutritional risk in the WIC Program were determined from the 1984 WIC State Plans, one for each target population group. The frequency or prevalence of nutritional risk within each group, under these "modal sets" of risk criteria used in the WIC Program, was then estimated from the health and dietary survey data. These estimates of risk frequency under representative WIC criteria were made for the specific income-eligible WIC population groups in each census geographic area (depending on the specific socioeconomic characteristics of each such group) as well as for the WIC income-eligible population nationally.

These estimates of risk frequency and resulting numbers of WIC eligibles do not reflect the differences that exist among States in their specific risk criteria defined for WIC eligibility, but rather their most widely shared elements. They provide a common

baseline for comparing the eligibility levels in States to those that would exist under the most commonly used nutritional-risk criteria among the 50 States and District of Columbia. The "modal" risk estimates provide a consistent measure of WIC eligibility throughout the country, thereby reflecting the level of need on a common comparative basis in all areas.

Income/Poverty Levels

The estimated numbers of persons eligible for WIC are also presented for three income/poverty levels (below 100, 100-130 and 130-185 percent of poverty) so that States using standards other than the 185-percent norm can estimate eligibility levels, by interpolation, under their own lower income limits.

Caveats

The number of eligible persons should not be interpreted as the maximum number of persons who would participate in WIC if funding were not constrained. Even in entitlement programs, such as the Food Stamp Program, a substantial number of eligible persons do not participate. For example, even among those persons who are enrolled for participation in the WIC Program, about 4 to 5 percent each month do not actually claim the benefits that are available to them.

Insofar as this study uses data which are not specifically designed to measure WIC Program eligibility (especially health and dietary survey data), its accuracy and reliability are limited to some extent. The estimates of persons fully eligible under nutritional-risk as well as income criteria are limited by the applicability of the survey data and uncertainty as to the relationship of the estimates to the process of actual WIC Program eligibility determination in the field. Nonetheless, these are the best estimates of WIC eligibility that are available at this time.

A more detailed description of the data sources used, the various procedures and estimation methods applied, and the technical aspects of the findings from the research can be found in the July 1987 report published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Analysis and Evaluation, Estimation of Eligibility for the WIC Program: Report of the WIC Eligibility Study (Summary of Data, Method and Findings and Technical Appendixes). All caveats and exceptions noted in the 1987 report also apply to this update.

FINDINGS

WIC Program Coverage and Participation

The estimated level of WIC Program coverage -- the estimated percentage of eligible persons actually participating in the program -- is shown in Table 1. The estimated number of persons fully eligible for the WIC program nationally are presented in Table 2. Table 3 presents the estimated number of persons participating in the WIC program nationally. Tables 1 through 3 present the data from 1984 and compare these data to the 1986 updates.

Key findings include:

- o Between 1984 and 1986 the estimated overall coverage rose 14.5 percent: from 39.9 to 45.7 percent of all WIC eligible persons.
- o The greatest growth in coverage occurred among infants (24.4 percent) and the least occurred among children (9.6 percent).
- o An estimated 9.1 million persons were income-eligible for WIC in 1986. Approximately 77 percent of these were estimated to be at nutritional risk, and hence fully eligible for WIC.
- o An estimated 46 percent of the 7.0 million fully eligible women, infants and children participated in WIC in 1986. The estimated number of persons participating in WIC rose 7.9 percent between 1984 and 1986. This is the estimated national average rate of coverage and is likely to vary considerably among States and local areas.
- o The estimated number of persons fully eligible for the WIC Program declined by 5.8 percent between 1984 and 1986. This decrease in the number of eligible persons contributed to the increased participation rate between 1984 and 1986.
- o The national average rate of coverage was highest for infants (83.2 percent) and pregnant women (54.0 percent), indicating targeting of program benefits to the most critical participant categories. Breastfeeding women (31.9 percent) and children (35.5 percent) had the lowest relative coverage rates.
- o Nutritional risk determined from medically based risk factors receives higher priority in the WIC Program (Priority Levels I-III) than nutritional risk based on dietary risk factors alone (Priority Levels IV-VI). The national average rate of coverage among all higher priority

WIC eligible persons rose 15.1 percent between 1984 and 1986: from 38.6 percent to 44.4 percent. This rate of growth was highest for infants (24.4 percent) and women (17.3 percent), once again indicating that program benefits are being targeted to the most critical participant categories.

- o The national average rate of coverage among all lower priority WIC eligible persons rose 13.1 percent between 1984 and 1986: from 52.2 percent to 59.1 percent.

TABLE 1
ESTIMATED WIC PROGRAM COVERAGE AMONG ALL
WIC ELIGIBLES, 1984-1986*

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u>
	(percent)		(percent change)
WOMEN:			
Pregnant	46.1	54.0	+17.1
Breastfeeding (0-12 months)	27.1	31.9	+17.7
Postpartum (0-6 months)	46.5	53.8	+15.7
ALL WOMEN	41.5	48.4	+16.6
INFANTS (0-1 year)	66.9	83.2	+24.4
CHILDREN (1-5 years)	32.4	35.5	+9.6
TOTAL, ALL GROUPS	39.9	45.7	+14.5

SOURCE: FNS administrative data, Study of WIC Participant Characteristics (FNS, 1986), WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987), and update of the WIC Eligibility Study.

*50 States and District of Columbia. Including Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands would add an estimated 300,000 fully eligible and 400,000 income-eligible persons.

TABLE 2

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PERSONS FULLY ELIGIBLE^{1/} FOR
THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986*

	1984	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
	(thousands)		
WOMEN:			
Pregnant	741	685	-7.5
Breastfeeding (0-12 months)	382	354	-7.5
Postpartum (0-6 months)	410	380	-7.5
ALL WOMEN	1,533	1,419	-7.5
INFANTS (0-1 year)	1,208	1,118	-7.5
CHILDREN (1-5 years)	4,709	4,478	-4.9
TOTAL, ALL GROUPS	7,451	7,015	-5.8

SOURCE: FNS administrative data, Study of WIC Participant Characteristics (FNS, 1986), WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987), and update of the WIC Eligibility Study.

^{1/}At nutritional risk under either WIC medically based risk criteria or dietary risk criteria or both.

*50 States and District of Columbia. Including Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands would add an estimated 300,000 fully eligible and 400,000 income-eligible persons.

TABLE 3

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PERSONS PARTICIPATING IN
THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986*

	1984	1986	1984-1986
	(millions)		(percent change)
WOMEN:			
Pregnant	0.34	0.37	+8.5
Breastfeeding (0-12 months)	0.10	0.11	+8.8
Postpartum (0-6 months)	0.19	0.20	+7.0
ALL WOMEN	0.64	0.69	+8.1
INFANTS (0-1 year)	0.81	0.93	+15.1
CHILDREN (1-5 years)	1.53	1.59	+4.0
TOTAL, ALL GROUPS	2.97	3.21	+7.9

SOURCE: FNS administrative data, Study of WIC Participant Characteristics (FNS, 1986), WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987), and update of the WIC Eligibility Study.

*50 States and District of Columbia. Including Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands would add an estimated 300,000 fully eligible and 400,000 income-eligible persons.

TABLE 4

ESTIMATED WIC PROGRAM COVERAGE AMONG HIGHER PRIORITY^{1/}
WIC ELIGIBLES, 1984-1986*

	1984 (percent)	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
WOMEN:			
Pregnant	47.2 <u>a/</u>	55.4 <u>a/</u>	+17.3 <u>a/</u>
Breastfeeding (0-12 months)	22.4	26.3	+17.5
Postpartum (0-6 months)	n.a. <u>b/</u>	n.a. <u>b/</u>	n.a. <u>b/</u>
ALL WOMEN	38.8 <u>c/</u>	45.6 <u>c/</u>	+17.3 <u>c/</u>
INFANTS (0-1 year)	67.1	83.5	+24.4
CHILDREN (1-5 years)	30.3	33.1	+9.4
TOTAL, ALL GROUPS	38.6 <u>c/</u>	44.4 <u>c/</u>	+15.1 <u>c/</u>

SOURCE: FNS administrative data, Study of WIC Participant Characteristics (FNS, 1986), WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987), and update of the WIC Eligibility Study.

^{1/}At nutritional risk under medically based risk criteria (WIC Priority Levels I-III); may or may not be at nutritional risk under dietary risk criteria.

*50 States and District of Columbia. Including Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands would add an estimated 300,000 fully eligible and 400,000 income-eligible persons.

a/ There is evidence that a particular limitation of the data available for estimating nutritional-risk frequency among women may have resulted in biased estimates for the numbers, specifically, of higher-priority and lower-priority pregnant women, tending to underestimate the former and correspondingly overestimate the latter. If this is so, the apparent difference in participation rate between these two particular groups is misleading. For a fuller description, see "Limitations of the Data and Estimates" in the WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987).

b/ Not applicable. Prior to 1985, by regulation, all postpartum women were certified at lower priority levels. At the time of this report, there is no Federal standard which directs the States to uniformly classify postpartum women into higher priority levels. Therefore, all postpartum women are classified for purposes of this analysis as lower priority WIC eligibles (see Table 12).

c/ Totals excluding postpartum women.

TABLE 5

ESTIMATED WIC PROGRAM COVERAGE AMONG LOWER PRIORITY^{1/}
WIC ELIGIBLES, 1984-1986*

	1984 (percent)	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
WOMEN:			
Pregnant	39.9 <u>a/</u>	46.7 <u>a/</u>	+17.3 <u>a/</u>
Breastfeeding (0-12 months)	51.2	60.1	+17.6
Postpartum (0-6 months)	46.5	53.8	+15.7
ALL WOMEN	45.7	53.1	+16.2
INFANTS (0-1 year)	65.7	81.7	+24.4
CHILDREN (1-5 years)	38.4	42.0	+9.4
TOTAL, ALL GROUPS	52.2	59.1	+13.1

SOURCE: FNS administrative data, Study of WIC Participant Characteristics (FNS, 1986), WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987), and update of the WIC Eligibility Study.

*50 States and District of Columbia. Including Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands would add an estimated 300,000 fully eligible and 400,000 income-eligible persons.

^{1/}At nutritional risk under dietary risk criteria only (WIC Priority Levels IV-VI, not including Priority Level VII: Prevention of Regression).

a/ There is evidence that a particular limitation of the data available for estimating nutritional-risk frequency among women may have resulted in biased estimates for the numbers, specifically, of higher-priority and lower-priority pregnant women, tending to underestimate the former and correspondingly overestimate the latter. If this is so, the apparent difference in participation rate between these two particular groups is misleading. For a fuller description, see "Limitations of the Data and Estimates" in the WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987).

Estimated Number of Persons Eligible

Tables 6 through 12 show the estimated numbers of eligible persons in more detail by comparing the numbers of income-eligible, fully eligible, higher-priority eligible and lower-priority eligible persons in the WIC target populations. These figures should be interpreted as the number of persons eligible and participating in an average month during the year, as opposed to the (larger) numbers that could be eligible or participating at some time during the year, or the (smaller) numbers eligible or participating throughout the year.

The method used to determine the growth rate of eligible persons was limited by the census data. This data does not collect specific information on pregnant, breastfeeding or postpartum women. There is only population data on infants, therefore, the growth rate applied to these participant categories was the same as the growth rate of infants. This assumes the same relative distribution of breastfeeding and postpartum women in the population in 1986 as in 1984. This method of "aging" the original data restricts all eligible women categories to be the same as the infants category. There is, however, separate population data on children, and this rate was applied to the category of children eligible for the WIC Program.

Key findings include:

- o The greatest decrease between 1984 and 1986 was in the estimated number of eligible pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, and infants (-7.5 percent), for all categories (income-eligibles, fully eligibles, higher-priority eligibles, and lower-priority eligibles). The smallest decrease was in the estimated number of eligible children, which decreased by 4.9 percent between 1984 and 1986 for all categories.
- o The estimated number of all WIC income-eligible persons decreased by 5.8 percent between 1984 and 1986.
- o The estimated number of all WIC fully eligible persons decreased by 5.8 percent between 1984 and 1986.
- o The estimated number of all WIC higher priority eligible persons decreased by 5.9 percent between 1984 and 1986.
- o The estimated number of all WIC lower priority eligible persons decreased by 5.6 percent between 1984 and 1986.

TABLE 6

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PREGNANT WOMEN ELIGIBLE FOR THE WIC PROGRAM,
1984-1986*

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
All Income-Eligible Persons <u>a/</u>	811,539	751,055	-7.5
WIC Fully Eligible Persons <u>b/</u>	740,608	685,410	-7.5
WIC Higher-Priority Eligibles <u>c/</u>	625,869	579,223	-7.5
WIC Lower-Priority Eligibles <u>d/</u>	114,739	106,187	-7.5

SOURCE: U.S. Census counts and State-level Vital Statistics for 1979-80, projected to comparable 1984 and 1986 levels using U.S. Bureau of the Census Current Population Survey estimates for March 1980, March 1985, and March 1987. WIC income-eligibility based on 1979, 1984, and 1986 annual incomes. Nutritional-risk estimates based on 1984 WIC State Plans of Operation and National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (DHHS, 1976-80) and National Natality Survey/National Fetal Mortality Survey (DHHS, 1980).

*50 States and District of Columbia. Including Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands would add an estimated 300,000 fully eligible and 400,000 income-eligible persons.

a/ Estimated number of persons below 185 percent of U.S. Poverty Guideline, based on 1984 and 1986 annual household income. All persons below 185 percent of poverty, adjusted to correspond to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Poverty Guideline measure of poverty of 1986. This measure of poverty, which is used in the WIC Program, is approximately three percent lower than the U.S. Bureau of the Census definition of poverty income. To the extent that the DHHS/OMB Poverty Guideline measure is applied to family or "economic" units within the larger household in actual WIC eligibility determinations, this differential will be offset to some extent or possibly reversed.

b/ At nutritional risk under either WIC medically based risk criteria or dietary risk criteria or both.

c/ At nutritional risk under medically based risk criteria (WIC Priority Levels I-III); may or may not be at nutritional risk under dietary risk criteria.

d/ At nutritional risk under dietary risk criteria only (WIC Priority Levels IV-VI, not including Priority Level VII: Prevention of Regression).

TABLE 7

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF POSTPARTUM WOMEN 0-6 MONTHS^{1/}
ELIGIBLE FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986

	1984	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
All Income-Eligible Persons	439,641	406,874	-7.5
WIC Fully Eligible Persons	410,292	379,712	-7.5
WIC Higher-Priority Eligibles	348,977	322,968	-7.5
WIC Lower-Priority Eligibles	61,314	56,745	-7.5

See sources and notes to Table 6.

^{1/}Prior to 1985, under WIC regulations, all postpartum women were certified under Priority VI. Since 1985, States may place postpartum women in Priorities III through VII. For consistency, these data show the estimated risk status of postpartum women on the same basis as other women. Definitional change would affect the All-Women and All-Group counts also.

TABLE 8

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF BREASTFEEDING WOMEN ELIGIBLE
FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986

	1984	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
All Income-Eligible Persons	429,966	397,920	-7.5
WIC Fully Eligible Persons	382,296	353,804	-7.5
WIC Higher-Priority Eligibles	319,912	296,069	-7.5
WIC Lower-Priority Eligibles	62,384	57,734	-7.5

See sources and notes to Table 6.

TABLE 9
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ALL WOMEN ELIGIBLE
FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
All Income-Eligible Persons	1,681,146	1,555,850	-7.5
WIC Fully Eligible Persons	1,533,196	1,418,926	-7.5
WIC Higher-Priority Eligibles	1,294,758	1,198,260	-7.5
WIC Lower-Priority Eligibles	238,437	220,666	-7.5

See sources and notes to Table 6.

TABLE 10
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INFANTS ELIGIBLE
FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
All Income-Eligible Persons	1,678,644	1,553,534	-7.5
WIC Fully Eligible Persons	1,208,468	1,118,401	-7.5
WIC Higher-Priority Eligibles	999,295	924,818	-7.5
WIC Lower-Priority Eligibles	209,173	193,583	-7.5

See sources and notes to Table 6.

TABLE 11
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CHILDREN ELIGIBLE
FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
All Income-Eligible Persons	6,261,452	5,954,346	-4.9
WIC Fully Eligible Persons	4,708,920	4,477,961	-4.9
WIC Higher-Priority Eligibles	3,467,987	3,297,892	-4.9
WIC Lower-Priority Eligibles	1,240,934	1,180,069	-4.9

See sources and notes to Table 6.

TABLE 12
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ALL WIC TARGET POPULATION GROUPS
ELIGIBLE FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
All Income-Eligible Persons	9,621,242	9,063,730	-5.8
WIC Fully Eligible Persons	7,450,584	7,015,288	-5.8
WIC Higher-Priority Eligibles	5,762,040	5,420,969	-5.9
WIC Lower-Priority Eligibles	1,688,544	1,594,319	-5.6

See sources and notes to Table 6.

Estimations by Type of Nutritional Risk
and by Income/Poverty Level

The estimated WIC-eligible population and those persons participating in 1984 and 1986 can be further subdivided by type of nutritional risk and by income/poverty level, as shown in Tables 11 through 26. The comparison of program coverage among these subdivisions of eligible persons indicates some additional dimensions of WIC benefit targeting, on average, at the national level. As previously noted, the rates of program coverage at State and local levels may vary considerably from the national average.

Key findings include:

- o Coverage increases as incomes decline; i.e., poorer eligible persons are more likely to be served by the program. The estimated coverage by income/poverty level in 1986 was:
 - 61.4 percent of eligible persons below 100 percent of poverty,
 - 55.2 percent of eligible persons below 130 percent of poverty, and
 - 45.7 percent of eligible persons below 185 percent of poverty.
- o This effect is particularly marked for pregnant women and infants. Estimated coverage of these eligibles in 1986 was:
 - 78.0 percent of pregnant women below poverty, and
 - 100.0 percent of infants below poverty.
- o When high-priority nutritional risk and below-poverty income level are cross-tabulated, the estimated rate of WIC Program coverage in 1986 appears slightly greater:
 - 84.8 percent of higher-priority pregnant women below poverty, and
 - 100.0 percent of higher-priority infants below poverty.

Other major findings from this update include:

- o Among the estimated 7.0 million fully eligible persons in 1986:
 - 1.4 million (20.2 percent) were women,
 - 1.1 million (16.0 percent) were infants,

- 4.5 million (63.8 percent) were children.
- o Among the estimated 1.4 million eligible women in 1986:
 - 48.6 percent were pregnant,
 - 26.8 percent were postpartum and breastfeeding, and
 - 24.6 percent were postpartum up to 6 months and not breastfeeding.
- o Among the 7.0 million eligible persons in 1986:
 - 5.4 million (77 percent) were estimated to be at risk on medically based criteria (i.e., "higher priority" -- WIC Priority Levels I-III) and
 - 1.6 million (23 percent) were estimated to be at risk on diet-based criteria only (hence "lower priority" -- WIC Priority Levels IV-VI).

TABLE 13

ESTIMATED WIC PROGRAM COVERAGE AMONG HIGHER PRIORITY^{1/}
WIC ELIGIBLES, 1984-1986*

	1984 (percent)	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
WOMEN:			
Pregnant	47.2 <u>a/</u>	55.4 <u>a/</u>	+17.3 <u>a/</u>
Breastfeeding (0-12 months)	22.4	26.3	+17.5
Postpartum (0-6 months)	n.a. <u>b/</u>	n.a. <u>b/</u>	n.a. <u>b/</u>
ALL WOMEN	38.8 <u>c/</u>	45.6 <u>c/</u>	+17.3 <u>c/</u>
INFANTS (0-1 year)	67.1	83.5	+24.4
CHILDREN (1-5 years)	30.3	33.1	+9.4
TOTAL, ALL GROUPS	38.6 <u>c/</u>	44.4 <u>c/</u>	+15.1 <u>c/</u>

SOURCE: FNS administrative data, Study of WIC Participant Characteristics (FNS, 1986), WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987), and update of the WIC Eligibility Study.

^{1/}At nutritional risk under medically based risk criteria (WIC Priority Levels I-III); may or may not be at nutritional risk under dietary risk criteria.

*50 States and District of Columbia. Including Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands would add an estimated 300,000 fully eligible and 400,000 income-eligible persons.

a/ There is evidence that a particular limitation of the data available for estimating nutritional-risk frequency among women may have resulted in biased estimates for the numbers, specifically, of higher-priority and lower-priority pregnant women, tending to underestimate the former and correspondingly overestimate the latter. If this is so, the apparent difference in participation rate between these two particular groups is misleading. For a fuller description, see "Limitations of the Data and Estimates" in the WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987).

b/ Not applicable. Prior to 1985, by regulation, all postpartum women were certified at lower priority levels. At the time of this report, there is no Federal standard which directs the States to uniformly classify postpartum women into higher priority levels. Therefore, all postpartum women are classified for purposes of this analysis as lower priority WIC eligibles (see Table 12).

c/ Totals excluding postpartum women.

TABLE 14

ESTIMATED WIC PROGRAM COVERAGE AMONG LOWER PRIORITY^{1/}
WIC ELIGIBLES, 1984-1986*

	1984 (percent)	1986 (percent)	1984-1986 (percent change)
WOMEN:			
Pregnant	39.9 a/	46.7 a/	+17.3 a/
Breastfeeding (0-12 months)	51.2	60.1	+17.6
Postpartum (0-6 months)	46.5	53.8	+15.7
ALL WOMEN	45.7	53.1	+16.2
INFANTS (0-1 year)	65.7	81.7	+24.4
CHILDREN (1-5 years)	38.4	42.0	+9.4
TOTAL, ALL GROUPS	52.2	59.1	+13.1

SOURCE: FNS administrative data, Study of WIC Participant Characteristics (FNS, 1986), WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987), and update of the WIC Eligibility Study.

*50 States and District of Columbia. Including Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands would add an estimated 300,000 fully eligible and 400,000 income-eligible persons.

^{1/}At nutritional risk under dietary risk criteria only (WIC Priority Levels IV-VI, not including Priority Level VII: Prevention of Regression).

a/ There is evidence that a particular limitation of the data available for estimating nutritional-risk frequency among women may have resulted in biased estimates for the numbers, specifically, of higher-priority and lower-priority pregnant women, tending to underestimate the former and correspondingly overestimate the latter. If this is so, the apparent difference in participation rate between these two particular groups is misleading. For a fuller description, see "Limitations of the Data and Estimates" in the WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987).

TABLE 15

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PREGNANT WOMEN ELIGIBLE
FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986
BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
<u>Population Group Totals</u>			
All Incomes	2,819,254	2,336,856	-17.1
<u>WIC Income-Eligible Persons a/</u>			
<100% of Poverty	366,670	337,246	-8.0
100-130%	178,111	152,321	-14.5
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>266,759</u>	<u>261,489</u>	-2.0
<185% of Poverty	811,539	751,055	-7.5
<u>WIC Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	344,363	316,729	-8.0
100-130%	158,778	135,418	-14.7
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>237,467</u>	<u>233,263</u>	-1.8
<185% of Poverty	740,608	685,410	-7.5
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles</u>			
<100% of Poverty	291,339	267,960	-8.0
100-130%	136,942	116,941	-14.6
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>197,558</u>	<u>194,321</u>	-1.6
<185% of Poverty	625,869	579,223	-7.5

SOURCE: WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987), and update of the WIC Eligibility Study.

a/ All persons below 185 percent of poverty, adjusted to correspond to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Poverty Guideline measure of poverty of 1986.

TABLE 16

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF POSTPARTUM WOMEN (0-6 MONTHS)
ELIGIBLE FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986
BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
<u>Population Group Totals</u>			
All Incomes	883,275	875,336	-0.9
<u>WIC Income-Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	241,280	221,918	-8.0
100-130%	89,348	75,200	-15.8
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>109,013</u>	<u>109,755</u>	-0.7
<185% of Poverty	439,641	406,874	-7.5
<u>WIC Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	235,230	216,354	-8.0
100-130%	79,760	66,712	-16.4
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>95,301</u>	<u>96,646</u>	+1.4
<185% of Poverty	410,292	379,712	-7.5
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles*</u>			
<100% of Poverty	201,087	184,951	-8.0
100-130%	68,968	57,734	-16.3
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>78,922</u>	<u>80,283</u>	+1.7
<185% of Poverty	348,977	322,968	-7.5

See sources and notes to Table 15.

*Postpartum women at medically based risk are included, although prior to 1985, by regulation, postpartum women were certified for WIC under lower priority levels only.

TABLE 17

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF BREASTFEEDING WOMEN (0-12 MONTHS)
 ELIGIBLE FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986
 BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
<u>Population Group Totals</u>			
All Incomes	1,245,170	1,223,978	-1.7
<u>WIC Income-Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	188,416	173,296	-8.0
100-130%	95,742	82,062	-14.3
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>145,808</u>	<u>142,562</u>	-2.2
<185% of Poverty	429,966	397,920	-7.5
<u>WIC Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	167,647	154,194	-8.0
100-130%	84,268	72,189	-14.3
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>130,382</u>	<u>127,421</u>	-2.3
<185% of Poverty	382,296	353,804	-7.5
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles</u>			
<100% of Poverty	139,456	128,265	-8.0
100-130%	72,016	61,774	-14.2
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>108,441</u>	<u>106,030</u>	-2.2
<185% of Poverty	319,912	296,069	-7.5

See sources and notes to Table 15.

TABLE 18

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ALL WOMEN
ELIGIBLE FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986
BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
<u>Population Group Totals</u>			
All Incomes	4,947,699	4,446,170	-10.1
<u>WIC Income-Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	796,366	732,461	-8.0
100-130%	363,200	309,583	-14.8
130-185%	<u>521,580</u>	<u>513,806</u>	-1.5
<185% of Poverty	1,681,146	1,555,850	-7.5
<u>WIC Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	747,240	687,277	-8.0
100-130%	322,806	274,319	-15.0
130-185%	<u>463,150</u>	<u>457,330</u>	-1.3
<185% of Poverty	1,533,196	1,418,926	-7.5
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles</u>			
<100% of Poverty	631,882	581,176	-8.0
100-130%	277,955	236,449	-14.9
130-185%	<u>384,921</u>	<u>380,635</u>	-1.1
<185% of Poverty	1,294,758	1,198,260	-7.5

See sources and notes to Table 15.

TABLE 19

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INFANTS
ELIGIBLE FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986
BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
<u>Population Group Totals</u>			
All Incomes	3,832,775	3,798,325	-0.9
<u>WIC Income-Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	873,409	803,322	-8.0
100-130%	346,876	293,287	-15.4
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>458,359</u>	<u>456,925</u>	-0.3
<185% of Poverty	1,678,644	1,553,534	-7.5
<u>WIC Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	642,649	591,079	-8.0
100-130%	249,460	210,615	-15.8
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>316,359</u>	<u>316,707</u>	+0.1
<185% of Poverty	1,208,468	1,118,401	-7.5
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles</u>			
<100% of Poverty	542,950	499,380	-8.0
100-130%	202,081	170,141	-15.8
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>254,265</u>	<u>255,296</u>	+0.4
<185% of Poverty	999,295	924,818	-7.5

See sources and notes to Table 15.

TABLE 20

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CHILDREN (AGES 1-5)
ELIGIBLE FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986
BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1984-1986</u> (percent change)
<u>Population Group Totals</u>			
All Incomes	14,382,286	14,589,913	+1.4
<u>WIC Income-Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	3,254,317	3,119,137	-4.2
100-130%	1,125,481	1,049,244	-6.8
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>1,881,655</u>	<u>1,785,965</u>	-5.1
<185% of Poverty	6,261,452	5,954,346	-4.9
<u>WIC Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	2,557,338	2,378,130	-7.0
100-130%	823,621	803,937	-2.4
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>1,327,962</u>	<u>1,295,894</u>	-2.4
<185% of Poverty	4,708,920	4,477,961	-4.9
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles</u>			
<100% of Poverty	1,895,411	1,816,678	-4.2
100-130%	640,040	569,620	-11.0
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>932,536</u>	<u>911,594</u>	-2.2
<185% of Poverty	3,467,987	3,297,892	-4.9

See sources and notes to Table 15.

TABLE 21

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ALL WIC TARGET POPULATION GROUPS
ELIGIBLE FOR THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986
BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	1984	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
<hr/>			
<u>Population Group Totals</u>			
All Incomes	23,162,760	22,834,408	-1.4
<u>WIC Income-Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	4,924,091	4,654,919	-5.5
100-130%	1,835,557	1,652,114	-10.0
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>2,861,594</u>	<u>2,756,697</u>	-3.7
<185% of Poverty	9,621,242	9,063,730	-5.8
<u>WIC Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	3,947,226	3,656,487	-7.4
100-130%	1,395,888	1,288,871	-7.7
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>2,107,470</u>	<u>2,069,930</u>	-1.8
<185% of Poverty	7,450,584	7,015,288	-5.8
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles</u>			
<100% of Poverty	3,070,242	2,897,235	-5.6
100-130%	1,120,076	976,210	-12.8
<u>130-185%</u>	<u>1,571,722</u>	<u>1,547,525</u>	-1.5
<185% of Poverty	5,762,040	5,420,969	-5.9
<hr/>			

See sources and notes to Table 15.

TABLE 22

ESTIMATED PERCENT OF PREGNANT WOMEN
COVERED BY THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986
BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	1984 (percent)	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
<u>Fully Eligible Persons a/</u>			
<100% of Poverty	66.1	78.0	+18.0
100-130%	40.0	50.9	+27.3
130-185%	21.1	23.3	+10.4
<185% of Poverty	46.1	54.0	+17.1
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles b/</u>			
<100% of Poverty	71.8	84.8	+18.1
100-130%	30.7	39.0	+27.0
130-185%	22.4	24.7	+10.3
<185% of Poverty	47.2	55.4	+17.4

SOURCE: WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987), and update of the WIC Eligibility Study.

a/ Estimated number of income-eligible persons who are at nutritional risk, on either medically based or dietary grounds, under the "modal" set of the nutritional-risk criteria recognized by the 50 States and the District of Columbia for WIC eligibility certification.

b/ Estimated number of income-eligible persons who are at nutritional risk under any one or more of the medically based risk factors included in the modal set of WIC Program nutritional-risk criteria.

TABLE 23

ESTIMATED PERCENT OF POSTPARTUM WOMEN
COVERED BY THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986
BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	1984 (percent)	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
<u>Fully Eligible Persons a/</u>			
<100% of Poverty	68.0	79.2	+16.5
100-130%	18.7	23.9	+27.8
130-185%	16.6	17.5	+5.4
<185% of Poverty	46.5	53.8	+15.7
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles b/</u>			
<100% of Poverty	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
100-130%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
130-185%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<185% of Poverty	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

SOURCE: WIC Eligibility Study (FNS, 1987), and update of the WIC Eligibility Study.

a/ Estimated number of income-eligible persons who are at nutritional risk, on either medically based or dietary grounds, under the "modal" set of the nutritional-risk criteria recognized by the 50 States and the District of Columbia for WIC eligibility certification.

b/ Not applicable. Prior to 1985, by regulation, all postpartum women were certified at lower priority levels. At the time of this report, there is no Federal standard which directs the States to uniformly classify postpartum women into higher priority levels. Therefore, all postpartum women are classified for purposes of this analysis as lower priority WIC eligibles.

TABLE 24

ESTIMATED PERCENT OF BREASTFEEDING WOMEN COVERED BY THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986, BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	1984 (percent)	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
<u>Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	32.3	38.2	+18.3
100-130%	29.9	38.0	+27.1
130-185%	18.6	20.7	+11.3
<185% of Poverty	27.1	31.9	+17.7
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles</u>			
<100% of Poverty	27.3	32.3	+18.3
100-130%	24.7	31.4	+27.1
130-185%	14.5	16.2	+11.7
<185% of Poverty	22.4	26.3	+17.4

See sources and notes to Table 22.

TABLE 25

ESTIMATED PERCENT OF ALL WOMEN COVERED BY THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986, BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	1984 (percent)	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
<u>Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	51.9	69.4	+33.7
100-130%	32.1	40.9	+27.4
130-185%	19.5	21.4	+9.7
<185% of Poverty	41.5	48.4	+16.6
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles*</u>			
<100% of Poverty	39.2	46.2	+17.9
100-130%	21.5	27.5	+27.9
130-185%	15.6	17.1	+9.6
<185% of Poverty	28.4	33.3	+17.3

See sources and notes to Table 22.

*Excludes postpartum women.

TABLE 26

ESTIMATED PERCENT OF INFANTS COVERED BY THE WIC PROGRAM,
1984-1986, BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	1984 (percent)	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
<u>Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	87.4	100.0*	+25.2
100-130%	46.7	63.6	+36.2
130-185%	41.1	47.3	+15.1
<185% of Poverty	66.9	83.2	+24.4
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles</u>			
<100% of Poverty	87.8	100.0*	+25.2
100-130%	49.6	67.8	+36.7
130-185%	37.0	42.3	+14.3
<185% of Poverty	67.1	83.5	+24.4

See sources and notes to Table 22.

*The percentage of infants covered by the WIC Program exceeds 100 percent at times. This is perhaps due to some errors in the estimation process, possibly resulting from the age of the poverty numbers used as the basis for estimation.

TABLE 27

ESTIMATED PERCENT OF CHILDREN COVERED BY THE WIC PROGRAM,
1984-1986 BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	1984 (percent)	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
<u>Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	42.1	47.1	+11.9
100-130%	27.8	29.6	+6.5
130-185%	16.7	17.8	+6.6
<185% of Poverty	32.4	35.5	+9.6
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles</u>			
<100% of Poverty	39.5	42.8	+8.3
100-130%	23.5	27.4	+16.6
130-185%	16.3	17.3	+6.1
<185% of Poverty	30.3	33.1	+9.2

See sources and notes to Table 22.

TABLE 28

ESTIMATED PERCENT OF ALL WIC TARGET POPULATION GROUPS
COVERED BY THE WIC PROGRAM, 1984-1986
BY ELIGIBILITY AND INCOME/POVERTY LEVEL

	1984 (percent)	1986	1984-1986 (percent change)
<u>Fully Eligible Persons</u>			
<100% of Poverty	52.7	61.4	+16.5
100-130%	32.2	37.6	+16.8
130-185%	21.0	23.1	+10.0
<185% of Poverty	39.9	45.7	+14.5
<u>Higher-Priority Eligibles*</u>			
<100% of Poverty	47.9	55.1	+15.0
100-130%	27.7	34.5	+24.5
130-185%	19.5	21.4	+9.7
<185% of Poverty	36.2	41.8	+15.5

See sources and notes to Table 22.

*Excludes postpartum women.

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